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Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session

Letter dated 24 October 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations addressed to the Chairperson of the First Committee

I have the honour to write you to express our concern at a publication sponsored by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), entitled "*Implementing Resolution 1540: the Role of Regional Organizations*", which was publicly presented to Member States last Wednesday, 22 October, at a parallel event to the work of the First Committee, held in Conference Room 4 at United Nations Headquarters.

Delegations to the First Committee have traditionally benefited from a number of different side events. In the opinion of Ecuador, the vast majority of these events have been useful and have contributed in one way or another to broadening the knowledge and information of Member States about various topical and important issues in the field of disarmament and international security.

It is therefore a matter of regret that a publication which, in our opinion, does not meet the minimum requirements of rigour and professionalism was launched at the seminar held on 22 October at the United Nations.

Ecuador deplores the fact that a United Nations institution that enjoys a reputation for prestige and seriousness, such as UNIDIR, has sponsored the publication and promotion of the above-mentioned book.

Specifically, our concerns, the same ones which were pointed out verbally by my delegation at the meeting on 22 October, are caused by the content of the chapter of the book that refers to resolution 1540 (2004) in Latin America and the role of the Organization of American States. In addition to inexcusable errors and outdated information, this chapter contains unacceptable and completely baseless statements about the status of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by certain States in our region.

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We are aware that, as stated in the publication, the works included reflect only the views of their authors and not necessarily the views or opinions of the United Nations or UNIDIR. It is nevertheless true that an event was held to launch the publication under the auspices of UNIDIR, a United Nations institution, and with the participation of Member States. And that is why we have no choice but to publicly register our concern.

It is not the purpose of this letter to enter into an academic debate and to review in detail the above-mentioned chapter of the book. It suffices to say that, while we agree with a part of its content, we have serious doubts about the depth and objectivity of the chapter as a whole.

We shall confine ourselves to giving only the concrete example that directly concerns Ecuador:

> On page 21, the author states that "The countries of Latin America face serious problems regarding the ability of the State apparatus to implement measures in this area, particularly States that lack a modern and efficient bureaucracy, resources and where the rule of law is fragile such as Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay and several countries in Central America".
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> We believe that issues related to compliance by States with a resolution such as resolution 1540 (2004), which was adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations and in respect of which failure by States to comply could even result in the adoption of punitive measures by the Security Council, should not be approached lightly, particularly in a publication sponsored by a United Nations institution.

I should be grateful if through you our concerns in this matter could be conveyed to UNIDIR. We sincerely hope that there will be no future occurrences of situations such as these, which in no way contribute to the efforts being made by all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to ensure the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

I should also be grateful if you would kindly arrange for this letter to be circulated as a document of the First Committee, under agenda item 91.

(*Signed*) María Fernanda **Espinosa**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Ecuador